

41. (Six Times Amended) A method of identifying an agent which enhances the activity of a caspase or procaspase, wherein said caspase or procaspase is expressed in immature thymocytes as a result of T cell receptor stimulation with SEQ ID NO: 9, and wherein said caspase mediates immature thymocyte susceptibility to cell death, comprising the steps of:
- (a) contacting an isolated form of a caspase or procaspase expressed in immature thymocytes as a result of T cell receptor stimulation with SEQ ID NO: 9, or an active derivative or fragment of said caspase or procaspase, with a caspase substrate in the presence of the agent; and
  - (b) comparing the activity of said caspase or procaspase in the presence of the agent with the activity of said caspase or procaspase in the absence of the agent, wherein enhancement of the activity of said caspase or procaspase in the presence of the agent is indicative that the agent is one which enhances the activity of said caspase or procaspase.
45. (Six Times Amended) A method of enhancing the activity of a caspase or procaspase, wherein said caspase or procaspase is expressed in immature thymocytes as a result of T cell receptor stimulation with SEQ ID NO: 9, wherein said caspase mediates immature thymocyte susceptibility to cell death, comprising contacting a composition comprising a caspase or procaspase expressed in immature thymocytes as a result of stimulation with SEQ ID NO: 9, or an active derivative or fragment thereof, with an agent that enhances the activity of the caspase or procaspase.
63. (Twice Amended) A method of identifying an agent which enhances the activity of a caspase or procaspase, wherein said caspase or procaspase is expressed in immature thymocytes as a result of T cell receptor stimulation with SEQ ID NO: 9, and wherein said caspase is necessary for apoptosis, comprising the steps of:
- (a) contacting the caspase or procaspase expressed in immature thymocytes as a result of T-cell receptor stimulation with SEQ ID NO: 9, or an active derivative or